

# Next practice: Positioning pastoral care as learning not just support...



# Student wellbeing Vs PC?







# Four key concepts

- Care (do we need this?)
- Clarity (what needs to be done?)
- Contact (what does it look like in action?)
- Consistency (where does this need to happen?)





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**What are the major student wellbeing trends at your school?**



**...How is this changing and within which groups?**



# Young Minds Matter

- National survey (2013-2014)
- Mental health and wellbeing of Australian children and adolescents
- Respondents:
  - Over 6000 parents/carers of 4-17 year olds
  - Nearly 3000 11-17 year olds

(Laurence et al, 2015)





# Major findings

- Almost **1 in 7 young people aged 4-17 years** experienced a mental disorder in previous 12 months = 560,000 young people (5.6X MCG)
  - **More males than females** (16.3% vs 11.5%)
  - **Most common**: ADHD, anxiety disorders, depression
  - Almost 1/3 had **2 or more mental disorders**
  - Among females: slightly **higher as age increased** (10.6% aged 4-11 vs 12.8% aged 12-17)

(Laurence et al, 2015)





# Major findings

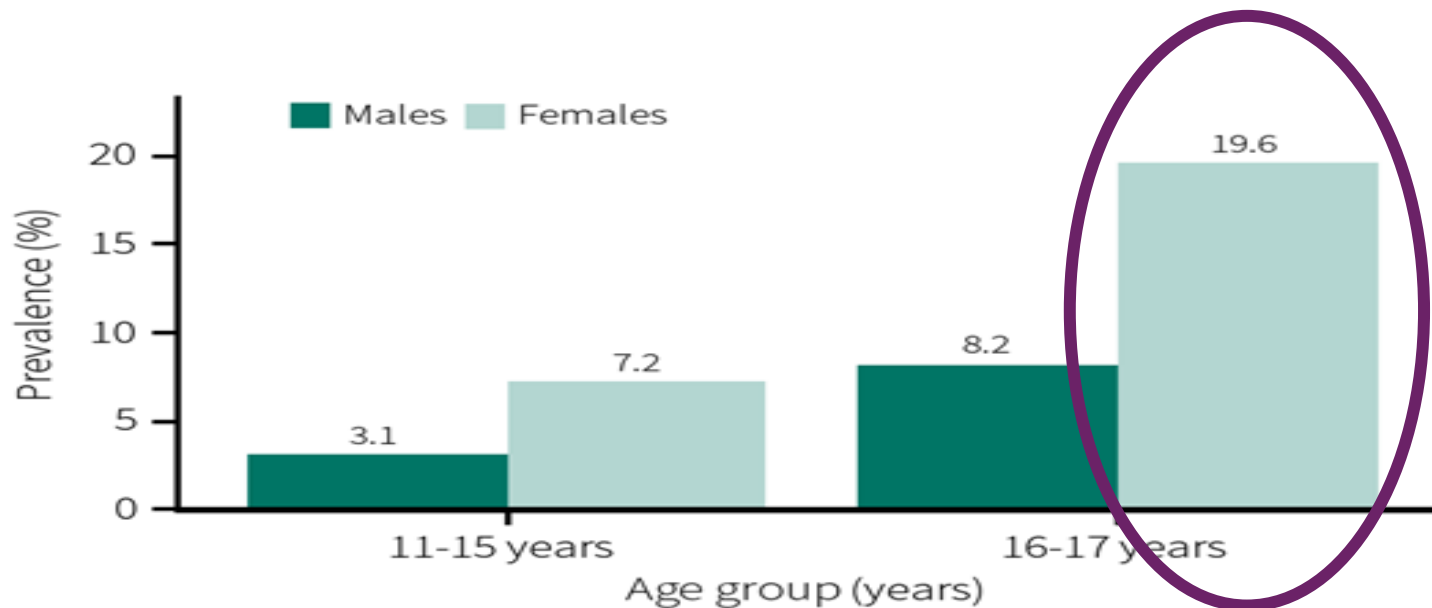
- Adolescents nearly 3 X more likely than children to experience **severe mental illness** (23% aged 12-17 vs 8.2% aged 4-11)
- Of those in need of services, **4 in 10** had needs fully met and 27.3% had their needs partially met.
- Major depressive disorder had **greatest impact** on school attendance and functioning.





# Males versus females...

- Major depressive disorder most common among older females



- Psychological distress almost 2X high for female adolescents (25.9% vs 14.8%)



# Self harm

- One in 10 young people aged 12-17 years have self-harmed = 186,000 young people
  - 16.8% of females aged 16-17 years have harmed themselves in the past 12 months; approx. twice as many as males
- One in 13 young people aged 12-17 years have seriously considered attempting suicide = 128,000 young people. 1 in 40 have attempted suicide.
  - Suicidal behaviours more common in female adolescents





# Seeking help...

## Key parent/carer barriers to seeking help:

- not sure where to get help (39.6%)
- not able to afford help (37.0%)
- prefer to handle the problem by themselves or with help from family or friends (31.1%)



# Is mental health the only factor?

- Where's the school-based evidence?
- Links between positive pastoral care and academic outcomes.







# Links between wellbeing and academic outcomes?

- Emotions can facilitate or impede children's:
  - Academic engagement
  - Work ethic
  - Commitment
  - School success
- Relationships and emotional processes affect how and why we learn

(Elias et al 1997)





# Growing evidence ...

- Social and emotional competency is associated with greater wellbeing and better school performance

(Eisenberg, 2006; Guerra and Bradshaw, 2008)

- Improvements in the school culture mediates almost all positive student outcomes

(Solomon et al, 2000)



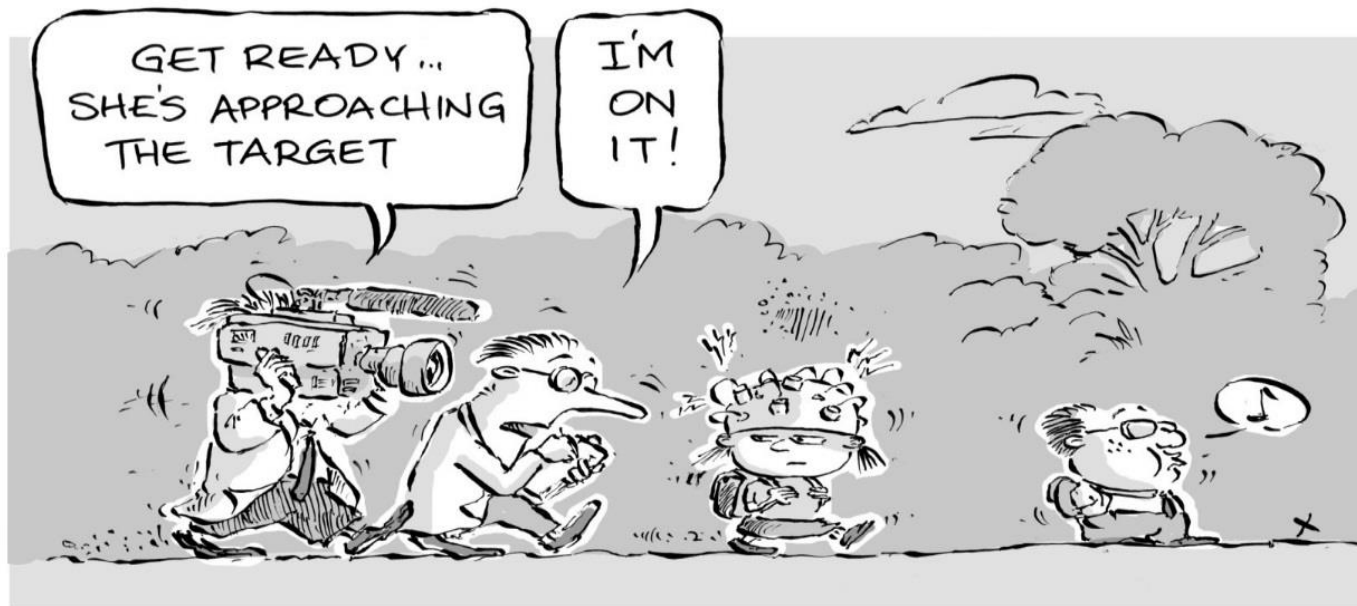
# Wellbeing and learning?

- Wellbeing is the ‘oil of learning’
- Wellbeing is not the destination but the nourishment for the learning journey ...

(Mann 2006)



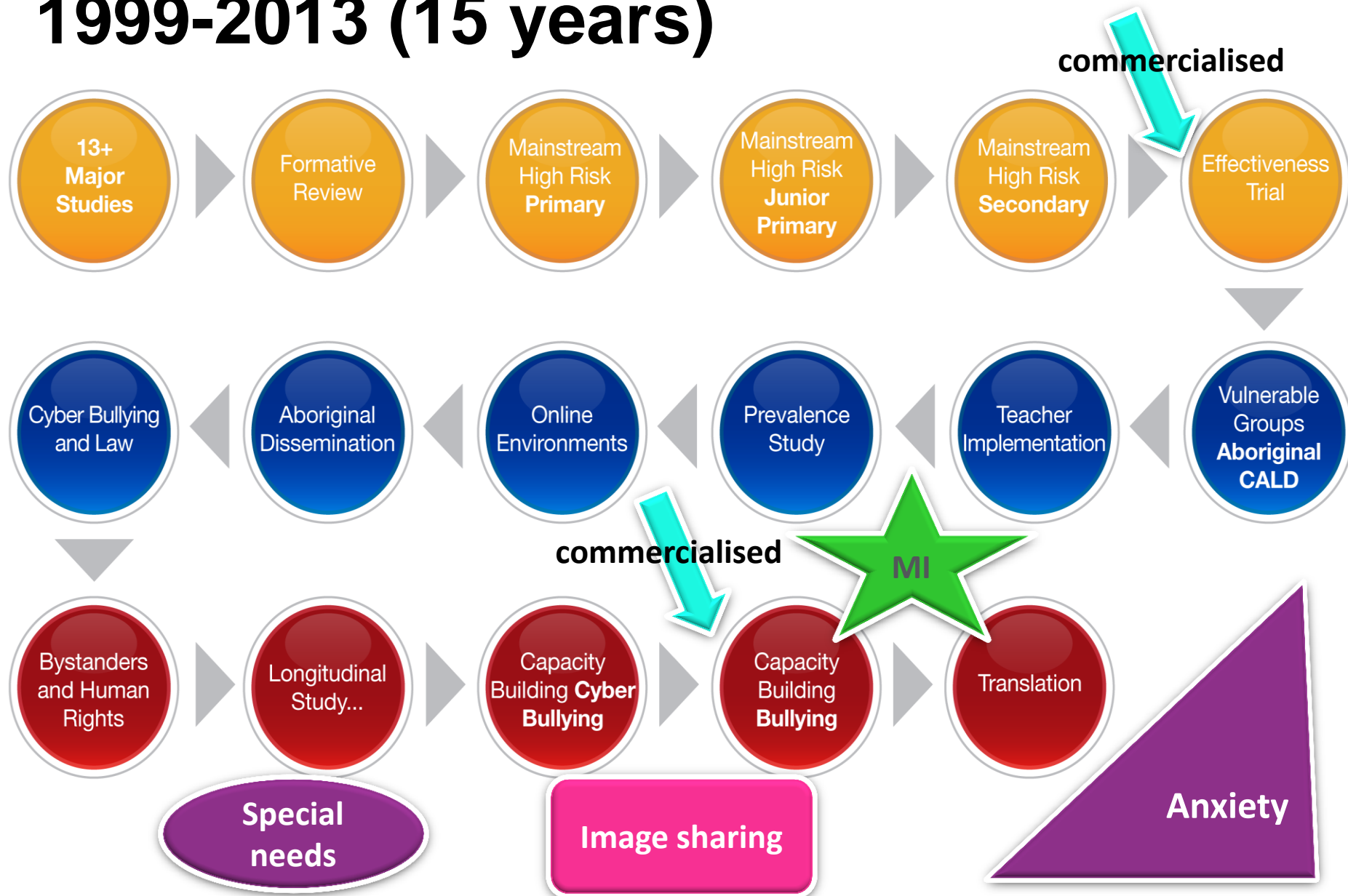
# Our research...



EARLY RESEARCH INTO SCHOOL BULLYING  
WAS MARRED BY EXTREME PERFORMANCE ANXIETY



# Wellbeing research pathway 1999-2013 (15 years)



# What are the major predictors of health and wellbeing?



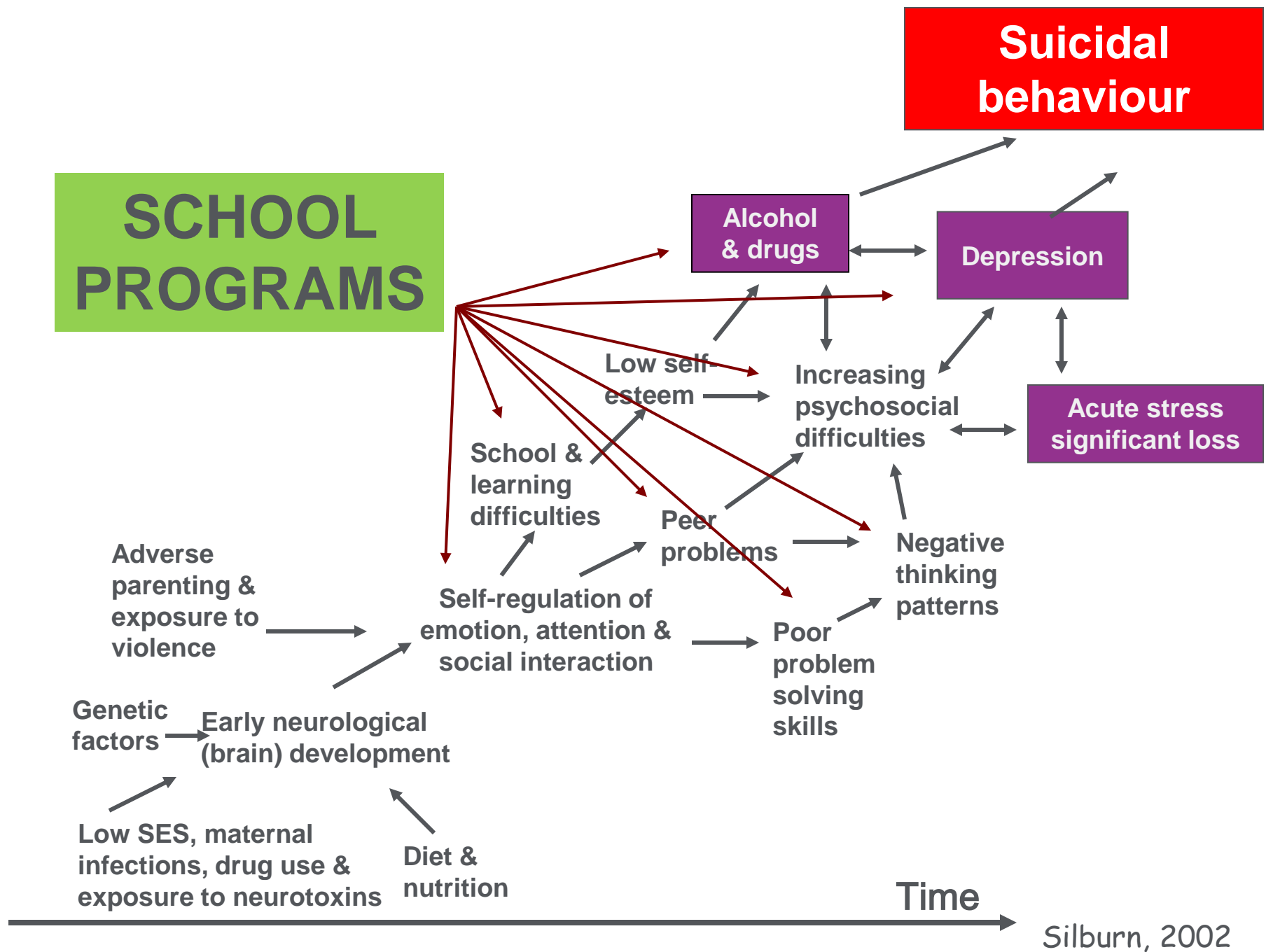
- Early life indicators (eg: low birth weight)
- Quality of parenting
- **Quality of schooling**
- **Qualities of friends (numbers/reciprocity)**
- **Connectedness**
- **Social norms and social expectations**



# The impact of school...

- Great school life equivalent to great home life and may compensate for poor home – significant relationships are key
- Poor school life equivalent to poor home life...

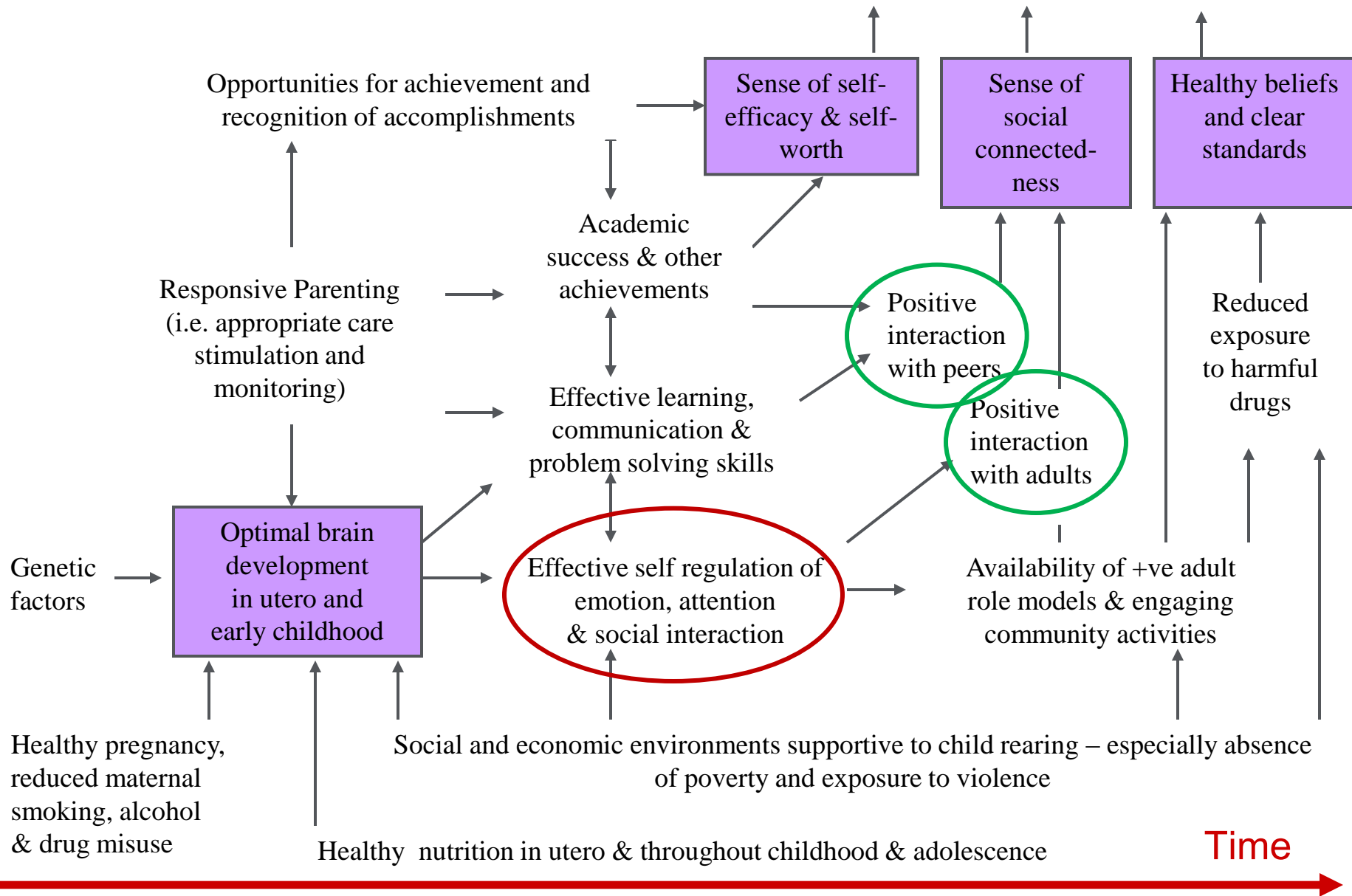






(Silburn, 2003)

## Personal achievement, social competence and emotional resilience





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# The load is large...

Pastoral care is  
everything we  
do and  
everything we  
say...



## Clarity breeds consistency



**What are the most important  
outcomes of pastoral care  
at your school?**







# Hmm...

- How did you define pastoral care?
- Are the outcomes for pastoral care defined at your school?
- How did you determine these actions weren't happening?
- What actions are important and why are they important?
- Who should be doing this and how often?
- Should these be monitored?





# Relative to your students' wellbeing concerns, how effective is your school's pastoral care strategy?

10 – outstanding

5 – piece meal

1 – pretty limited





# Positive proactive action



- What actions are being taken to maintain and enable positive wellbeing?
- What actions are being taken to prevent negative wellbeing trends?
- What actions are being taken to manage negative wellbeing?



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- What actions are being taken to manage negative wellbeing?

# How are the outcomes of these activities being measured?





Take a minute...



What are **2 important actions**  
your school needs to take to  
**improve its pastoral care outcomes?**  
(that are not already happening)



# Action plan for (student wellbeing) school improvement

**Stage 1: Engage the community**

**Stage 2: Review staff wellbeing**

**Stage 3: Review student wellbeing outcomes**

**Stage 4: Use data to assess current practice**

**Stage 5: Map policies/practices against outcomes**



# But wait there's more...

**Stage 6: Enable staff to reflect on own PC practice**

**Stage 7: Decide what needs to stop, start, keep**

**Stage 8: Delineate the strategy, roles and responsibilities**

**Stage 9: Communicate progress regularly**

**Stage 10: Provide sufficient resources for plan**







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# Teacher behaviours and 'YES' to learning

## Most Likely

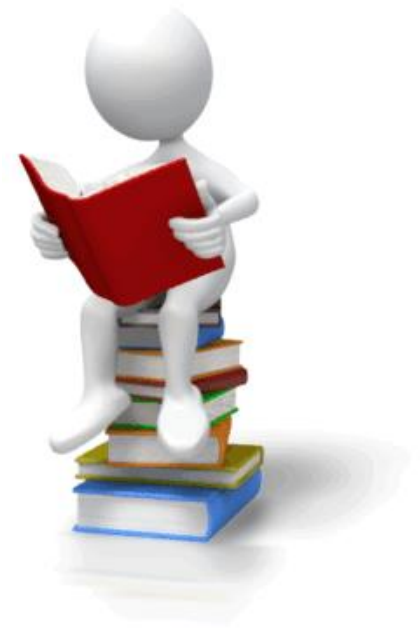
When my teacher:

- Smiles at me
- Says hello to me
- Talks to me
- Shows me he/she is proud of me
- Takes an interest in what I do

## ...Also

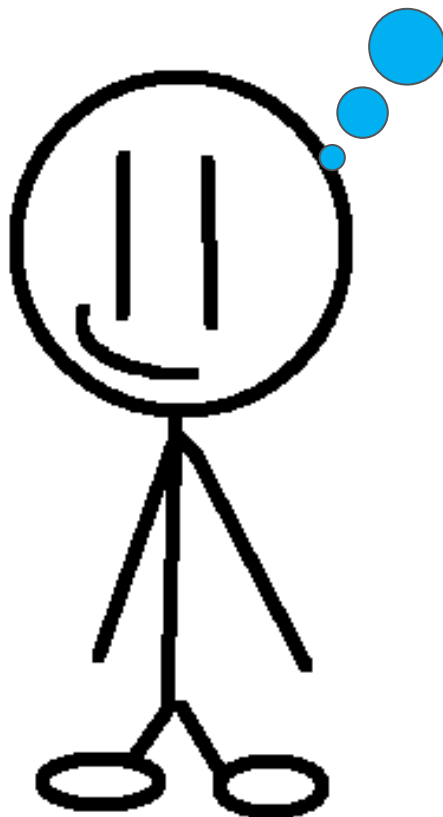
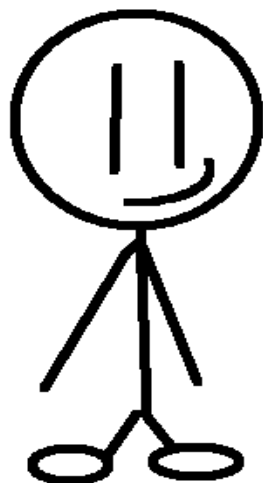
When my teacher:

- Organises a fun activity
- Notices my effort
- Sets interesting work
- Encourages me to join in
- Helps me learn from my mistakes





Every contact  
is a pastoral  
care contact



# Behavioural mistakes

Treat social mistakes in the same way that we treat other learning errors...






# 'Lack of belonging' can get under your skin...

For example:

bullying is a form of trauma that impacts our stress response and even alters gene expression in some individuals' contributing to long term physical and mental health problems.







**If you don't like a  
student, keep trying  
until you do.**

Positive relationships are  
the 'oil of learning'



# Sample Relational Messages

Possible Message	How to Develop It
I am interested in you	Use of observation and narration
I can be a helper	Indicate verbally “I am here to help you with that if you need me”
I am consistent	Establish and maintain schedule and support
I will support you	Maintain contact and composure even when child is upset
I am safe	Create contexts where it is okay to make mistakes



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# How does your school build a positive school culture/climate?



IN A DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO TACKLE BULLYING  
THE PRINCIPAL REACHED OUT TO THE PARENTS

# 6 blind men and an elephant



- Trunk – rope
- Tail – snake
- Leg – tree trunk
- Body – wall
- Ear – fan
- Tusk - spear





# When less is more...

- Consistent whole school delivery across years
- Based on students' needs
- Matched to outcomes
- *Warp and weft* delivery of pastoral care
- Sequential pastoral care delivery
- Balance of active and reactive





# Next practice?

- Peers as pastoral carers
- Online help provision and advice
- Social information processing
- Pastoral care of staff / parents
- Diffusion of responsibility?
- Prepared for 'chaos'
- Mental health first aid (students)





To enhance student wellbeing outcomes what would you recommend your school should:



- **Keep doing?**
- **Stop doing?**
- **Start doing?**
- **Do more of?**

(what will help you to make this decision?)

